

Wm. Parker

with the author's In regard

THE CLAIMS
OF THE
CAPE COLONY AND ITS MISSIONS
ON THE
Congregational Union of South Africa.

BEING PREPARED

AS THE ADDRESS OF THE CHAIRMAN (THE
REV. WILLIAM THOMPSON), AT ITS ANNUAL
MEETING TO BE HELD IN CAPE TOWN, 1883.

"For none of us liveth to himself."—ROM. xiv. 7.

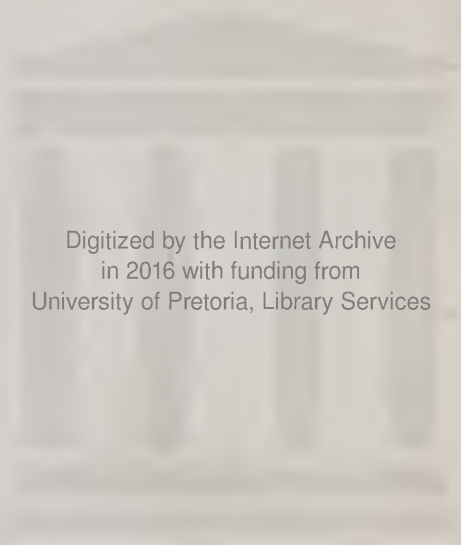
"By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall."—J. DICKENSON.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to
dwell together in unity."—PSALM cxxxiii. 1.

CAPE TOWN :

SAUL SOLOMON & CO., PRINTERS, ST. GEORGE'S STREET.

1883.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016 with funding from
University of Pretoria, Library Services

THE CLAIMS

OF THE

CAPE COLONY AND ITS MISSIONS

ON THE

Congregational Union of South Africa.

BEING PREPARED

AS THE ADDRESS OF THE CHAIRMAN (THE
REV. WILLIAM THOMPSON), AT ITS ANNUAL
MEETING TO BE HELD IN CAPE TOWN, 1883.

“For none of us liveth to himself.”—ROM. xiv. 7.

“By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall.”—J. DICKENSON.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to
dwell together in unity.”—PSALM cxxxiii. 1.

CAPE TOWN :

SAUL SOLOMON & CO., PRINTERS, ST. GEORGE'S STREET.
1883.

“It is evident indeed, that great pains are taken to draw our People, especially our inconsiderate young People, who are too unmindful of the King and God of their Fathers, from their Love and Attachment to those first Principles of these Churches. But, as Naboth said to Ahab concerning his vineyard, in 2 Kings, xxi. 3, *The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the Inheritance of my Fathers unto Thee.* Even so it is fit that we should say to such as would entice us to part with the pure Order of these Churches: *This was our Father's Inheritance,* and God forbid that any should persuade us to give up our inestimable Rights, for the very Thought of parting with them is Shocking.”—Samuel Mather—*Apology, &c.*—Quoted by Dr. H. M. Dexter.

“I cannot refrain from expressing my regret, in which you will all share, that a large and influential religious community, with which we are *so much* in harmony, should be separated from us by a difference of opinion on the subject of baptism; on one particular view of which some of its ministers and members—though happily not all—insist, as though the very ‘foundations of the earth would be out of course’ unless their view is received as the *only* scriptural one.”—*Outside the Fold, &c.*, p. 11, 12. By Thomas W. Aveling, D.D.

THE CLAIMS
OF THE
CAPE COLONY AND ITS MISSIONS
ON THE
Congregational Union of South Africa.

Dear Brethren in the Ministry of the Gospel, and to all
in the Membership of the Congregational Union
of South Africa,—

It gave me great pleasure to accept your invitation, so kindly given to me at the last annual meeting, to become your Chairman for the year ; and now, according to custom, it devolves upon me on laying down my office to address you on some topic or topics bearing on the object of our Union, and contributory to its attainment. Beyond a general agreement, however, with my remarks, I do not expect you to endorse all the views and reasonings they contain, nor to become in any way responsible for them. You, I am sure, will receive them with indulgent candour, if you do not with approval, and even of that I have no reason to doubt.

I. OUR EARLY DIFFICULTIES OF MEETING TOGETHER, AND
OUR HISTORY AS A UNION OF VOLUNTARY EVANGELICAL
CHURCHES, AND OF OUR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT INTO
THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

The distance of Cape Town from the Eastern portion
of the Colony, the seat of so many of the Churches in

sympathy with us, the difficulty of obtaining supplies for the pulpits during the necessary absence of the Pastors, and the expense of time and of money in travelling, have greatly hindered us from following out our original intention to hold the annual meetings of our Union occasionally in this City. This has been to all of us a matter of disappointment and regret, and we who reside here have long been conscious of the loss of the advantages which are the outcome and fruits of such fraternal gatherings. Your visit to-day brings them once more within our reach, and we welcome you to our City, to our homes, and to our hearts. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source and the sum of all blessing, rest upon all now assembled ; and may our deliberations be guided by His Spirit, and conduce to His glory, in the abundant prosperity of the Churches of the Congregational Faith and Order, and in the general extension of His Kingdom in this land ! This will be abundant compensation for the expense and toil of our gathering.

When we last met within these walls, now 20 years ago, and within four of the formation of our Union, it was my privilege then, as it may be said to be virtually mine to-day, through the courtesy of my esteemed successor, the Rev. James Hoyle, the present Pastor of the Church, to perform a like pleasing duty—the rare and the honourable one—to bid you a hearty welcome in the name of the Congregational Independents of Cape Town and its vicinity. On that occasion some of the Brethren from the East came a distance of more than 600 miles to meet Brethren from the West who had journeyed 300 miles with a corresponding object. This involved in the weak state of the Ministry among us, and in the primitive mode of travelling over our bad roads then available, sacrifices which were felt

to be burdensome, and led to the formation of the Eastern and Western Divisions of the Union, and to our being content with sending delegates from one to the other, to our respective annual meetings. Subsequently, and for similar economic reasons, this arrangement also, after a few years, ceased to be carried out, but without any formal dissolution of our Union, much less any diminution of brotherly love. We this day awaken old memories, and indulge new hopes.

It may not be uninteresting to mention that being, by choice of the Brethren then composing the Union, Chairman on the occasion referred to, my Address was on "*The Position, Aims, Resources and Prospects of Voluntary Churches in general, and of Congregational Churches in particular.*" The subject at the time was considered to be not inappropriate, as our chosen designation then was—"The Union of Voluntary Evangelical Churches in South Africa,"* a designation adopted at its formation at Graham's Town in 1859, but changed to that of "THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA" at the Meeting held at Port Elizabeth in July, 1877, as the former was felt to be no longer sufficiently characteristic, nor indeed suitable, after the passing by the Colonial Legislature in 1875 of the Bill which left the support of the different Churches under its temporal jurisdiction to the free will offerings of their respective adherents—a measure in itself just and necessary, but strongly contested by the recipients of State-pay, and their timid but, as observation and experience have shown, mistaken friends. The time,

* See *Explanatory Statement of the Origin, Objects and Constitution of the Union of Voluntary Evangelical Churches in South Africa.* By the present Chairman.

however, had come for the anomaly to cease when men of diverse races and of alien faiths, who actually were the majority of the people, should be taxed for the supposed pecuniary benefit of the minority—comprising the educated and the well-to-do of the community—and a measure for their relief was introduced and carried to a successful issue by the sagacity and perseverance of *Saul Solomon, Esq., M.L.A.*, to whom not only we, as a Denomination, owe, but the entire Colony also owes, a large debt of gratitude for his multifarious labours as a citizen, a philanthropist, and a statesman ; and whose most valuable services in the chief departments of human interest it has been my privilege to witness and to be stimulated and encouraged by, for upwards of the third of a century. We as a people rejoice to own Mr. S. as one of our number, and the far-seeing originator of our Union. I cannot say less than this and may be misunderstood if I say more. He, I trust, will pardon this reference to himself.

The choice of a topic then, as now, on which to hold discourse with the Brethren assembled for Christian fellowship and counsel was determined by what seemed to me *adaptation* to our special circumstances as Colonists in a land where, with all our advantages, we were not as a nation like our countrymen in Australia, or in New Zealand, the first European settlers, but, from early political causes, their successors, and that too under some disadvantages, not only as speaking a language different from that spoken by the original Colonists and their descendants ; but in consequence of the Cape Colony having become a possession of the British Crown, the government of it has fallen largely into the hands of our countrymen ; which notwithstanding the influence of our representative institutions—the boon

of late years—not unnaturally has prevented thorough cordiality of feeling between the two peoples, and sometimes has produced a much to be regretted irritation. To this must be added that we have been the fellow-workers in the great field of religion and philanthropy with the Ministers and Members of the Dutch Reformed Church, by whom for a long time our principles were not well understood, and frequently were regarded with suspicion ; and subsequently, and as we are to-day, the compatriots of these and of other men whose views of ecclesiastical polity are dissimilar to our own ; or, as we think, less in harmony with the inspired Word, the only statute book of Christ's Kingdom, and our own trustworthy and sufficient guide. We are glad to note that the "mountains interposed" between us at earlier periods are now being removed, and that the "kindred drops" are "mingling into one." May the consummation be hastened !

Another observation may be permitted, without any unjust or unnecessary disparagement of ourselves. At this great distance from the centres of religious thought and life, it is not to be expected that there should be among us the sagacity to choose, and the ability to discuss, the high themes brought of late years before the Congregational Union of England and Wales, at its spring and autumnal meetings. We yield to none of our countrymen in admiration of the fitness to a European constituency of the subjects chosen, and of the eloquence and moral power of the Chairmen who discuss them, nevertheless we are inclined to doubt whether such themes, and the mode of treating them, would be altogether suited to our very limited community, to our own circumstances and times ; the latter, however, have been kept steadily in view by our successive Chairmen, and have been met with no mean ability and with

gratifying success.* When we thus meet for fraternal council and fellowship we are not allowed to forget that at present our numbers are few, that the Churches we represent are weak, and that it is still with us the "day of small things." This consideration—healthful as it is to entertain as inducing humility!—should not discourage, but on the contrary should stimulate us to greater efforts in our great work for the good of our fellowmen, and the glory of the Master whom we serve. By His grace "the little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation. The LORD will hasten it in his time."

It should ever be borne in mind by the most feeble worker among us, that he does not stand alone in aim, labour, trials and successes ; but that he is borne upon the heart in Christian sympathy, not only by the Brethren in this Union, thus officially connected with him, but virtually by all in this land, or elsewhere, who offer the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," and by personal effort seek to hasten its approach. Thank God, that however isolated our position may be, individually or as Churches, we are not alone, unheeded and uncared for ; we have the presence of Christ and the sympathy of His people. In addition to the Congregational Union which we this day represent, we thankfully recognize, and cordially bid God-speed to, other Christian organizations in this country, whether British or Foreign, which

* Of these it is a great pleasure to select for mention those of which I have printed copies before me, viz. : *The Position of the Evangelical Voluntary Union and the Practical regard due to it.* By the late Rev. R. B. Taylor in 1868. *Some Aspects of Colonization and Christianity.* By the Rev. T. Durant Philip, B.A. in 1879. And the *Address of the Chairman*, the Rev. W. B. Philip, B.A., in 1882.

are *one with us on the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance*, and are, we believe, pursuing a similarly great object with our own ; and this we conscientiously declare to be no other than to sow with diligence, faith and prayer the seed of Gospel truth in this comparatively virgin, and in some respects uncongenial, soil, and prepare the way for the harvest of the future. The members of our families and Churches who come after us, referring to what may be told them of our numerical weakness, of our limited means of operation, and of the many difficulties which beset our path, will, we believe, be able to say exultingly, and at the same time giving the glory to God—

“ The seed,
The little seed men laugh'd at, in the dark
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side
A thousand arms.”

Then the Great Teacher's prophetic parable of “ The grain of mustard seed ” will have become an accomplished fact.

II. OUR POSITION AS COLONISTS AND THE DUTIES ARISING OUT OF IT TOWARDS THE LAND WE LIVE IN AND ITS INHABITANTS—WHETHER THE EUROPEAN LONG RESIDENT THEREIN, OR THE NEW-COMERS WHOM THE TIDE OF IMMIGRATION HAS BROUGHT TO OUR SHORES ; OR WHETHER THE ABORIGINAL TRIBES BY WHOM WE ARE SURROUNDED.

We gratefully acknowledge that in the allwise and beneficent arrangements of Divine Providence, we have our home in this Southern land, rightly named “ The Cape of Good Hope ”—happyomen!—and that as Colonists we are permitted to do our part to develop

its resources, and to educate its people to make the best use of them. Our aim, however feebly put forth, is to advance its present interests, physical, intellectual and moral; and by our fidelity to the principles of righteousness and peace between man and man, to do our part to commend the doctrine of "our God and Saviour Jesus Christ," and remove thus one of the great *stumbling blocks* which unhappily has so long stood in the way of its reception by the Native tribes of this continent.

There is yet another—an evil of untold magnitude, and increasing at an alarming rate, I refer to *Intemperance*. Ought we not more vigorously to do our part to stem the torrent, now alas, overspreading the land, counter-acting all good influences, social and religious, and bringing disgrace and ruin on both Europeans and Natives? If we neglect to do so, it may with truth be said that "we are verily guilty concerning our brother," for we allow a stumbling block to be put in his way in the form of strong drink. So long as selfish and unprincipled traders are allowed without restriction to supply brandy and gunpowder to the weak and liquor-loving Natives, there will be little prospect of industry and peace, and our Missionary brethren will "spend their strength for naught and in vain" in the endeavour to promote their civilization and Evangelization. Loud is the call upon us to step in and seek to prevent this failure of elevating them, and to arrest the much dreaded catastrophe of their extermination.

We cannot be indifferent to the fact, on the contrary we rejoice in it, that in the over-ruling Providence of the Infinitely Wise and Good, the "Governor among the nations," *the surplus populations of Europe—among them many invalids—are flocking to our shores in the hope, the reasonable hope, of finding in the broad*

expanse of our only partially-tilled plains, or in our rich and vast mineral beds, or in our extending commerce, and under our genial skies, a climate more favourable to the preservation and enjoyment of life, and facilities for providing homes for themselves and for their families, present and prospective, greater than in the agricultural districts, or in the overcrowded cities from which they voluntarily expatriate themselves. It thus frequently happens that many strangers, —especially the young men and women of the number— as is to be expected, seek from us, the older residents, timely information and advice. We do not hesitate to recognize their claims upon us to meet their wishes, and to aid them so far as may be in our power. If early taken into their confidence, we may have the opportunity, by our counsel and encouragement, to cheer them in their new surroundings, to mould their characters, and to give profitable direction to their lives.

Members of Congregational Churches, or persons who have been in the habit of worshipping with our Brethren and friends in the Fatherland, have claims upon us to which we are at all times anxious to respond; and when introduced to us by commendatory letters which, if in good standing they ought to be, or by attending our services, we gladly avail ourselves of the opportunity to make their acquaintance, and render them the sought assistance. It is much to be regretted, and causes great sorrow of heart to friends at home and to ourselves, that so many members of our Churches, or adherents of our Denomination in the home-country, should on coming out here be lost to us for the want of making themselves known soon after their arrival. It is not merely that as a matter, it may be, of their then personal convenience, or from the want of sufficient thought, that they form new religious connections

with whom they are not in full sympathy; but that after a time and without intending it, they altogether drift away from the sanctuary of God and its ordinances of worship, and cast off their former profession of faith in Him, through Christ, and become moral wrecks. Of how many once promising young disciples may it be said, as it was of the Galatians of old:—"Ye were running well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" Would to God that we could obtain the unbiassed hearing of such persons; it would be to address them in the words of the great Apostle—"Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. Be ye not therefore partakers with them; for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light." Eph. v. 6—8.

I speak the sentiments of the Members of the Union—Ministers, Deacons, and indeed of all connected with us, when I say that any apparent personal neglect of new-comers is quite unintentional; and this might, to some extent, probably be remedied, if not by distinct organizations formed for the purpose at the different ports of the Colony, yet by the ordinary methods of communication with us on arrival. Past experience, however, on the part of Ministers and Members of Churches, justifies the remark, that it is unreasonable to expect that confidence, attention and kind offices *should be all on one side*.

The claims upon our sympathy and aid are not by our own countrymen, or even by Europeans exclusively. To say nothing of the ever-increasing Jewish element in our heterogeneous population since the discovery of diamonds in the Colony, we have many thousands of Malays, the followers of the false Prophet, with some

Hindus and Chinese, the latter recently introduced to cheapen and otherwise to affect the labour market. In addition to the above classes of the people, we are surrounded more remotely on our Colonial frontiers, and even in our very neighbourhood, by the *Native tribes* whom it would be contrary to all our traditions as British Christians, and to our own best feelings, to neglect, or to pass by. *The Aboriginal inhabitants of the country have claims upon us* which ought not to be lightly estimated, much less to be disregarded with impunity. May our common Father enable us, in some measure, to meet these demands on our intelligence, activity and faith! The desire to do so is not, on our part, wanting.

For a moment let us pause, and endeavour to realize upon what our duty, as members of this Congregational Union, rests. If property of any kind, real or personal, has its responsibilities, in proportion to its privileges, as all right-minded men allow, so has National prestige, political power and empire, wealth and intelligence; and the Parent State owes to her Colonial dependencies, and to each of their diverse inhabitants, protection, equal laws, and all that is included in good government. The same may be said of what is due individually from subject to subject, from the highest to the lowest. Not less so, but in a vastly higher degree, does the possession of the Gospel involve on the part of Christian men the highest obligation to make it known to non-Christian men, to those races of men in this country, now in barbarism—for to-day we have them more immediately in view—who in the Providence of God, the Supreme Ruler, have been brought under the sway of our beloved Sovereign, and are thus our fellow-subjects.

It is cause for gratitude to Him in whose hands are

the hearts of all men, that this great duty is now being recognized ; but it was not always so in this land,* so long the land of the down-trodden and the slave. Public opinion on the rights of the Natives is becoming more enlightened, and we ourselves owe to this influence much of the sentiment and the practice which distinguish us from the earlier Colonists. It is our own high honour that we are the representatives and successors of those philanthropic men who, favoured by God, did so much to bring about the change. We accept the trust handed down to us and wish to transmit it to the coming generation that they also may accept it and pass it on, unimpaired in clearness and force of responsibility, and with the example, however imperfect, of our own honest administration of it.

It is generally believed by the observing and the thoughtful among us, and it is often said, and not without adequate reasons, that *there is a grand future before South Africa*. The capabilities of the country are undoubtedly great, and all that is needed to draw them out is human forethought, skill, energy, untiring industry, patience and hope. Among the agencies to

* See *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry upon the Hottentot Population of the Cape of Good Hope, and of the Missionary Institutions*. Ordered by the House of Commons to be Printed 1st July, 1830. *Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Aboriginal Tribes (British Settlements)*, 26th June, 1837. Sir Benjamin D'Urban in his despatch to Mr. Secretary Rice of 28th October, 1834, stated " that a complete effectual reformation of our system of proceeding with the native tribes (if that may be called a system which seems to have been guided by no fixed principles, certainly by no just one) had become absolutely necessary."

be employed, as a preparatory process, *Christian Missions among the Native tribes* will, under God, be not the least of the successful. Civilization will ever keep pace with the Gospel, and one of the many fruits of Missions will be a well-trained and trustworthy industrial class, the pressing want of the Colony, and the hope of the regions beyond it. If properly utilized we need no other assistant labour.

The Report recently published of the *Government Commission on Native Laws and Customs* contains a mass of important information obtained from the most competent and trustworthy sources, with the valuable suggestions and recommendations of the Commissioners themselves, which must form the basis of future Legislation, and will do much to promote the advancement, physical, intellectual and moral, of the Coloured races, and with it of the Colony generally. We cannot but hail this movement as a token for good.

With an earnest desire of, in some degree, contributing to the same result, and bearing in mind our own past history in connection with the work of our Churches among the Native tribes of this continent, and the success which has already attended it, and as a further step in advance of past measures for the improvement and consolidation of that work, I ask your attention to the enquiry—*When do Mission Churches lose their distinctive character, and attain to the dignity and freedom of Congregational Churches strictly so called?* Or, to be more explicit, can we lay down a dividing line between the natural and recognized oversight, secular and spiritual, by Missionary Societies, and the complete independence of the Churches, which they—to use Scriptural terms—have “planted” and so long and assiduously “watered”; and can we, instrumentally,—seeking help from God, the only source of all true power,

which in the economy of Redemption is imparted to the believer individually and thus to the aggregate body of believers, to the Church, through the HOLY SPIRIT!—can we, instrumentally, do aught to stimulate and perfect the fruitage of the Churches, or in other words to facilitate their independence, to strengthen their position, and to increase their usefulness? If so, it cannot be denied that we are under the highest obligation to them, and to our Lord and King to make the attempt. It was in the spirit of the Master, both his and our own, that Paul the Apostle wrote, “For none of us liveth to himself,” and we know from the fragmentary records of his life, that he illustrated the axiom by his own bright example. And, by the same grace, Why should not we?

III. THE LABOURS AND SUCCESSES OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN THIS COLONY, WITH A GLANCE AT THE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY, ARISING FROM ITS UNDENOMINATIONAL CHARACTER, WHICH OCCASIONALLY CONFRONTS THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION IN ITS DESIRE TO CARRY ON AND TO COMPLETE, THROUGH THE NATIVE CHURCHES, THE WORK THUS AUSPICIOUSLY BEGUN.

At the very threshold of our enquiry as a Congregational Union, we are met by a difficulty, not simply theoretical, but one which presents itself, with more or less of importance, in actual Church organization and life. An instance recently occurred. Some very able and good men on the Board of Directors of the London Missionary Society, and than whom none are more deeply interested in the cause of Christ, are known to have had “strong misgivings on the score of principle,” where we, not better informed than they, but equally

conscientions, did not imagine that any could exist, *e.g.* on the grant to the proposed Institution for training Evangelists, who eventually should become Pastors of Churches. And wherein did the difficulty appear? The honoured Society to which we ourselves and the Native Churches spoken of are so much indebted, and which justly commands our confidence and support, is *undenominational* in its character and working. THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE on which it was founded is thus laid down :—

“AS THE UNION of Christians of various denominations in carrying on this great work is a most desirable object, so, to prevent, if possible, any cause of future dissension, it is declared to be a FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE of THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY, that its DESIGN is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy, or any form of Church Order and Government (about which there may be difference of opinion among serious persons), but the GLORIOUS GOSPEL of the blessed God, to the Heathen ; and that it shall be left (as it ought to be left) to the minds of the persons whom God may call into the fellowship of His Son from among them, to assume for themselves such form of Church Government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the WORD OF GOD.”

The long interval which has passed since the adoption of this catholic and noble principle of the constitution of *The Missionary Society*, the name by which it was first known, has witnessed great changes in the aggressive action of the churches of Great Britain and Ireland upon the Heathen and the Mohammedan world, and led to the formation of Societies more or less avowedly denominational. The practical effect has been—while

probably a gain to the general cause of evangelization and in this respect a matter for devout thankfulness to God, who overruleth all things!—to leave the supply of funds, and of Agents to carry on the work in connection with the older Society, chiefly to the Congregationalists, and of these the Independents—for the Baptists have a Society of their own—while its original constitution has, for certain legal and prudential reasons, remained unchanged, and probably will so continue.

In addressing ourselves to the enquiry now before us, it is sufficient to note these *facts* in connection with their *bearing on the spread of the particular form of Church Polity*—simple, efficient, and scriptural as it can be shown to be!—*with which we*, the members of this Union, *stand identified in this country*; although it may be admitted not materially, if at all, to affect the general interests of the cause of Christ, in the spread of the Gospel, which to promote has ever been the Society's great aim, as it is our own. In trying to estimate the relative importance of certain aspects of Scriptural teaching, we, and our Brethren generally, would say, *Christianity first* in its grand truths and its living power over the soul of man to convert, build up and save, and *Congregationalism*—the scriptural development of Church Order, when believers are united in Christian fellowship for mutual edification and for the glory of Christ for whom they are the witnesses—*afterwards*.^{*} Strange indeed and unworthy of ourselves

* “The future will be with the Church that has in it the greatest moral forces, and the greatest moral forces are those that most powerfully affect the conscience and the religious heart of men. . . . For the strength of a Church consists not in the orthodoxy of its

if it were otherwise. It would be a sad day for us as a people if in our own spiritual experience and in our outer life, the converse of it were ever true. We disclaim it.

A brief statement of *the connection of the London Missionary Society with the Missions of this country*, may aid us in forming a just view of their mutual relations, with the reciprocal duties which arise out of them. The Society commenced its operations here in 1799, and the Reverends Dr. Van der Kemp and Messrs. Kicherer, Lingen and Read were among its first Missionaries. Since then, and without intermission in this true and only Apostolical succession known to us, a great number of European and of Native Agents have been in its employ, and sustained by its funds. The names of the Rev. Drs. Philip, Livingstone and Moffat will go down to posterity as among the most distinguished Missionaries of modern times. Many other self-denying men, as the Rev. Messrs. Helm (2), Kramer, Albrecht (2), Vos, Wimmer, Ebner, Schmelen, Pacalt, Melville, Anderson, Monro, Hamilton, Wright, W. Philip, Ross, Hughes, Barker, Kayser, Elliott (2), Taylor, Kitchingham (2), Hood, Robson, Gregorowsky,

creed, the organization of its government, or the completeness of its code, but in the developed faculty and moral feeling of its individual members, whereby it becomes a law unto itself, and endures though all official government should fail. And, in the very nature of things, this can be secured only by exercises of personal responsibility, demand and struggle, experiment and mistake, failure and success." *The Church of the Future*, pp. 24, 39. By Henry Allon, D.D. An Address from the Chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales at its Autumnal Meeting, held in Manchester, October 4, 1881. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Edwards, Cockin, Smit—who when administering the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper at the close of the meetings of the Baptist Union at Graham's Town two years ago, was suddenly called to his rest and reward!—these Brethren, and many others, less known to the religious public, through the Press, than the three above named, laboured on in this land with a devotedness and fidelity never probably as a body of Missionaries surpassed, persevered amid difficulties, disappointments, and often misapprehensions and reproach, as if conscious of being under the eye of the Master alone, and as if little influenced by mere human recognition, save that of the sympathizing Directors and Constituents of the Society. And in this they were assisted—often most unobtrusively and efficiently as the Missionary brethren are to-day—by their respective wives.

It is difficult from the want of access to some of the early financial statements, to form a correct estimate of the expense incurred by the Society in this country since the commencement of its operations; but its aggregate must have been, and indeed we know it to have been, many scores of thousands of pounds sterling. It has had Stations in Namaqualand and in Griqualand, and it still has under its care Stations within the Colony and beyond its borders, in Kaffirland, in Bechuanaland, and as far as the land of the Matebele, 1,500 miles from Cape Town. Following up the discoveries of Dr. Livingstone, the Society has commenced its operations on the shores of Lakes Gnamí and Tanganyika, and thus practically has given effect to his memorable saying, "The end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the Missionary enterprise." Many Missionaries including the above-mentioned, with the exception of Dr. Moffat, have died in the service of

the Society in this country, and many others still remain pursuing their great work, and long, very long, if it shall please God, may they continue to do so, and with ever-increasing success! Eternity alone will reveal the amount of good effected by the instrumentality of the Society in promoting *Civilization*, directly and indirectly, as all Missionary operations most assuredly do, and above all by the preaching of the Cross, in bringing, by its attractive power, many converts from heathenism to a Christian life, who after their earthly sojourn, have departed in the faith and hope of the Gospel of Christ, and are now among the resplendent jewels of His mediatorial crown. Of those who still abide with us, and of our own duty to them, I am now to speak. There is no little need for "the wisdom profitable to direct."

Is it unreasonable to suppose, or rather ought we not to expect, that the Society which through its Agents has laboured for so many years in this country, has planted so many stations at great expense, has watched over them with unremitting care, and still continues to foster them, so far as its aid may be needed, or its constituents and supporters supply the means—should continue to feel a deep interest in their welfare, even when the earlier bond of affiliated relationship—for it is something like that of Parent and Child!—becomes in some degree relaxed on the part of the Churches, by lapse of time, by growth, and by other circumstances leading to the attainment of self-sustentation, and with it of complete independence? It is difficult to believe that this can seriously be called in question by the thoughtful.

But if admitted, as at once reasonable and safe, the questions arise, *What is the nature and extent of the control the Society should exercise? and when should it cease?*

Upon the right understanding and judicious settlement of these questions, depends under God, the comfort of the Brethren in charge of the respective stations of the Society, and the efficiency of their labours. At any time they would command serious attention, and you, dear and honoured Brethren, will agree with me in thinking that after recent events* with which, I presume, all of us are more or less acquainted, and in which some of us have been painfully interested, as deeply concerned for the good name of the London Missionary Society and for the cause of Christ itself, so far as they affect the spiritual wellbeing of a community, they are not unsuitable to the deliberate consideration of this Union. I submit them to the Brethren for that purpose, and invite their indulgent attention to an attempt to understand more clearly our position and its duties.

Have we anything in the New Testament to guide us in our mode of conducting Modern Missions to the unenlightened and degraded Heathen? Or, failing explicit direction, are we left to the application of those general principles which we arrive at by the study of the Word of God, as its meaning is opened up to us by the *Holy Spirit*? Our enquiry is not whether believers in the first age of the Church of Christ aided with their gifts the Apostles and their fellow-labourers in the spread of the Gospel among the Heathen, civilized or barbarous, or ministered out of their own abundance, and sometimes indeed "beyond their power," and of their deep-searching "poverty," to the wants of the neccssitous of their recently formed fellow-disciples: this we know from the Epistles was taught as a religious duty; and as in the case of the "Churches of

* At Hlankey.

"Macedonia" led to "that state of heart in which a man does not regard his own slender means nor any selfish consideration, but has his eye fixed exclusively upon his brother's needs." But the enquiry is intentionally restricted to one point, and that as to the absolute spiritual freedom, exemption from all oversight, of the Primitive Churches, and how far in circumstances not strictly analogous with our own, the practice of inspired men may be inferred, and become a rule to ourselves.

So far as I know we have no record in the Acts of the Apostles, or notices in any of the Epistles, or in uninspired, but trustworthy history, of continuous Missionary labours among *uncivilized* and heathen people, like the various Native tribes in this country; and hence if carried on at all among them, in the absence of authentic records, it is impossible to speak with certainty of the way in which they were conducted, by whose expense they were sustained, by whom they were superintended, and when they became free of all control from without, and were left untrammelled by regulations. In fact the information which has come down to us is too meagre and indefinite to be a guide for ourselves in conducting the modern Missionary enterprise. It must be borne in mind that the record of the Missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul and his companions is very brief and fragmentary. Their labours were conducted in the great centres of population and of civilization, in the emporia of commerce, and in the chief seats of learning, of idolatry, and of Imperial power in the ancient world—"from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum." And in every place they found great numbers of Jews, and preached in their Synagogues. Not only so, but the Old Testament Scriptures had been translated into the Greek language

and widely circulated, and all this was favourable to the propagation of Christianity, and an important means of preparing the world for the reception of it.

And is not the silence of Scripture in this case—on modes of labour, of sustentation, and of oversight—as it frequently is in other cases, instructive! This, however, we may learn from its pages; that when there were departures from the Christian faith, as to some extent in the churches of Galatia; or gross social scandals as in the church at Corinth; the Apostles interfered that doctrine might be maintained in its purity, and that the end of Christian ordinances might not be frustrated, and the name of Christ might not be blasphemed among the heathen. And this interference it may be presumed was in proportion to the extent of the existing evil, and the Apostles' right to exercise the oversight and discipline of the early Churches. Was it not for this cause, as we are taught in one of the Pastoral epistles, that Paul left Titus in Crete that he might "set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city," as he, the inspired Apostle, "gave him charge?" Where, however, have we the evidence from the New Testament that Titus was made *Bishop of a Diocese*, in the modern sense, Chief Pastor of a number of Churches or parishes? The same may be said of Timothy and with equal pertinency and force. The subscriptions to the Epistles addressed to these *Evangelists* for such only they were—are spurious, and are very properly omitted in the Revised Version. Moreover *Bishop and Elder* are synonymous and interchangeable terms—Tit. i. 5, 7. Acts xx. 17, 28. 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. Gr.

The assertion made by some defenders of Diocesan Episcopacy that Bishops succeeded the Apostles, Presbyters or Elders the Prophets, and Deacons the

Evangelists, is utterly without evidence. It is admitted even by many Episcopalians^o themselves, and is unhesitatingly maintained by us, as Congregationalists, on what can be shown to be unimpeachable and conclusive evidence—the pretensions of those persons notwithstanding who on their own behalf and on the behalf of others who are in agreement with themselves, assume the contrary, a position which, considering the important issues at stake, it is for them to prove, and not merely to assert!—that the *Apostles left no successors* except in doctrine and in life. But in the latter as well as in the former, so far as their known practice extends, surely they are our guides; or their accredited writings, which include both, have come down to us in vain. We may fail to find in the action of these *extraordinary Church officers*,† for such we

* “That the same officers in the Church who were first called Apostles came afterwards to be designated Bishops, is baseless. If the two offices had been identical, the substitution of the one name for the other would have required some explanation. But in fact the functions of the Apostle and the Bishop differ widely. The Apostle, like the prophet or the evangelist, held no *local* office. He was essentially, as his name denotes, a missionary, moving about from place to place, founding and confirming new brotherhoods. . . . It is not therefore to the Apostle that we must look for the prototype of the Bishop. How far indeed and in what sense the Bishop may be called a successor of the Apostles, will be a proper subject for consideration; but the succession at least does not consist in an identity of office.”—*St. Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians*. By J. B. Lightfoot, D.D. (now Lord Bishop of Durham) p. 194. Edition 1868.

† The learned Dr. Barrow, late Master of Trinity College in Cambridge, in his very able and exhaustive work, *A Treatise of the Pope’s Supremacy*, writes :— “Supposition II. 4. The Apostolical Office as such was personal and

regard them, an exact precedent for our own in altered circumstances ; but is there not a principle underlying all that they said or did (that of adaptation of means to ends), which admits of being applied to the conducting of Missions among the uncivilized portions of our race, and which justifies all wise operations for the attainment of specific ends, as the formation of societies, to promote the circulation of the Bible and of religious tracts, and for other religious and philanthropic objects by the Church of God, including civilizing processes as well as preaching the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ? If so, the inference is legitimate that we are at liberty in the exercise of an enlightened judgment to use such means as are adapted to our own circumstances and times—availing ourselves of all modern facilities of communication—to bring men under the influence of the Gospel by word of mouth or by the printed page, and for that purpose to combine together to collect funds, to employ agents, to erect buildings, and to superintend the whole until the first stages in the new order of things having passed away, it becomes no longer necessary.

It further follows that it is for the Directors, as chosen by, and representing, the constituents of a society, to say whether the funds they have collected, and the buildings for ecclesiastical and other purposes erected by them, or under their auspices, shall be used otherwise than that for which they were originally

temporary ; and therefore according to its nature and design not successive or communicable to others, in perpetual descendance from them. It was, as such, in all respects extraordinary, conferred in a special manner, designed for special purposes, discharged by special aids, endowed with special privileges, as was needful for the propagation of Christianity and founding of Churches." Page 77. Folio edition, 1683.

designed, and for which they are held in trust. To suppose that they can be so used is a misconception of the nature of a trust, and further of the reciprocal duties arising out of the relation which exists between the employer and the employed ; between the provider of means and those who enjoy them ; between a voluntary society, resting for support on the opinion and confidence of the religious public, and its Missions ; and the disregard of corresponding relations in connection with strictly secular affairs, or those of common life, would be looked upon as a breach of faith which general society would frown upon, and the law which expresses its will would not tolerate, but visit with a penalty.

When the financial independence of a Church has been attained—an event kept steadily in view, urged from time to time with affectionate earnestness, and looked forward to with deep solicitude by the London Missionary Society, as releasing funds which are needed for the further extension of the Gospel—the question arises what shall be done with the *Buildings* in which it has been accustomed to meet for religious worship, or to carry on its schools, and for other social and evangelizing agencies ? The reply is that the Mission Board in 1855 passed the following Resolution :—

“That the Directors will most readily transfer to suitable and approved persons as Trustees, Chapels, Schools and Mission houses, now the property of the Society, for the sole use and occupation of the Churches who may practically carry out the Scriptural principle of self-support.”*

*The form of a deed of transfer to Trustees of property belonging to the London Missionary Society is now under consideration by the Directors, and will shortly be sent out to the Colony.

Is not this offer at once liberal and worthy of a great Society, and at the same time somewhat in analogy with what has taken place in the political circumstances of the Colony? After the granting of Responsible Government, the proper outcome of Representative Institutions, the Imperial Government did not, as in anger, cast us off, neither did the Colonists wish to dissolve the connection between themselves and the home country; there still exists, and may it ever exist, the bond of loyalty, of consanguinity, of gratitude and affection, which is stronger than any political, conventional or legal bond.

There are thousands of the poor of Christ's flock in Great Britain and Ireland, and on the continents of Europe and America, and throughout Christendom, who would be devoutly thankful to be put into circumstances of equal advantage, temporally and spiritually, with members of some of our Mission Churches in this country. God grant that all of them—as in simple justice it may be said that not a few of them already do!—may realize their position with its corresponding responsibilities, and show, by a holy and consistent manner of life, that they have not received “the grace of God in vain.”

We confess to many disappointments, but what then? In every land it may often be said, with deep sorrow of heart, that the cause of Christ suffers damage through the inconsistencies of its professed friends and adherents—an admission which candour demands. And shall we be surprised that the unreasonable expectations of the avowed opponents, and of some well-meaning but inconsiderate supporters, of Missions, are not to the full extent realized in the lives of the people among whom they are conducted? It is admitted that on the part of the devoted men and women who labour

among the heathen or their immediate descendants and of their true wellwishers everywhere, there is at times' great danger of unduly fostering their self-consciousness, and of extenuating their faults, and not less danger of the opposite conduct towards them, extremes alike injurious to the formation of manly, Christian character. But surely we ought to judge of these converts from a degrading heathenism, and until of late years men utterly uncivilized, as we ourselves wish to be judged by others, in accordance with the natural law—"first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Were this the case many of the prejudices against the Native Christians would be removed altogether, or at any rate would be greatly softened. It would be seen that although some of them, in our judgment, are immature and weak, they give evidence of sincerity; and that their Missionaries, although hopeful and indeed sanguine, as they need to be, are not being deceived. It was said of our Master and Lord—"A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench."

IV. OUR OWN PRESENT RELATION AS A CONGREGATIONAL UNION TO THE NATIVE CHURCHES GATHERED AND FOSTERED BY THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN THIS COLONY—ARISING FROM OUR BEING THE NEAREST TO THEMSELVES AND THE SOCIETY, OF EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS, ECCLESIASTICALLY, IN DOCTRINE, AND IN SYMPATHY OF OBJECT—AND THE DESIRE ON OUR PART FOR THEIR TRUE SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIFE WHICH WE BELIEVE WOULD BE GREATLY PROMOTED BY JOINING OUR BROTHERHOOD.

It may be expected that thus released from even the semblance of a state of dependence and pupillage at

one time necessary, and practically left to choose a form of Church government for themselves, and to enjoy the use of the Church property when the conditions laid down in the above Resolution of the Directors of the Society have been complied with—a Society which has been to them as a producing mother, and has continued its aid to provide for their varied wants, temporal and spiritual—and has now left them as the New Testament itself leaves them, unfettered by mere human restrictions except such as they voluntarily take upon themselves, the Mission Churches will remain or become Congregational, and will wish to join our Union.

It may be convenient to state that by *Congregationalism* is meant, to use the words of an American writer, "That system of Church government, in which the Scriptures are recognized as the only infallible guide respecting Church order and discipline; and which maintains, that according to the Scriptures, a Church is a company, or congregation, of professed Christians, who, having voluntarily covenanted and associated together to worship God and to celebrate religious ordinances, are authorized to elect necessary officers, to discipline offending members, and to act, authoritatively and conclusively, upon all appropriate business, independently of the control of any person or persons whatsoever."—*Punchard*.

Are we desirous and prepared to receive these Churches into the fellowship of our Union? And what is that ecclesiastical constitution, derived from the New Testament, which we invite our less advanced Brethren to consider and accept? The former enquiry has already met with a very hearty affirmative response, and for many years past our Brethren have been welcomed to our brotherhood. To the spirit of the latter enquiry, we submit, not a religious *creed* of human drawing up

and as such of imperfection ; and which in every case has been so liable to abuse, painfully hampering and ensnaring the conscientious, while failing to restrain the unscrupulous from holding and teaching views the opposite of some it was intended and framed to uphold—as witness the present state of parties in the Church of England with reference to the 39 Articles, and some of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, and the discussions which the Confession of Faith has called forth during late years !

Avoiding what to ourselves seems undesirable and indeed impracticable, the stereotyping the forms of human thought, we adopt as more convenient and equally efficacious and valuable, but without subscription, “*A Declaration^s of the Faith, Church Order and Discipline of the Congregational Independent*” section of the Church of Christ to which we belong, as em-

* “There are various declarations of the kind. The difference between them and authoritative creeds is this, that the latter profess to be the doctrine of the Catholic Church imposed on all its members as necessary to the enjoyment of its communion and privileges, whereas the former are simply the articles of a free and voluntary confederation among a number of communities which do not presume to lay down a belief for others, still less define the limits of the Church of Christ, least of all to pronounce how much faith is essential to salvation, but simply to affirm that they themselves, as members of the Church of Christ, mean to set forth these doctrines as, in their judgment, part of His Holy Gospel.”—*The Church Systems of England in the Nineteenth Century*. The Sixth Congregational Union Lecture. By the Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, B.A., p. 638-639. Hodder and Stoughton, 1881.—An admirable work which can scarcely be too strongly recommended to intelligent Nonconformists.

bodying in substance those things in fact, doctrine, and precept which have been most fully established among us, including that mode of Church government—Congregational in form and independent of all merely human control from without—a government by the people, subject only to the law of Christ the Supreme Ruler, but in other respects a religious democracy, which we believe to be most in accordance with the text and the spirit of the New Testament, and at the same time, as is to be expected, a system beyond any other eminently suited to the conditions of Colonial life.* With these convictions of the scriptural character of our ecclesiastical polity ought we not to be more more aggressive, and not to rest content with merely acting on the defensive when it is attacked? Our catholicity of spirit and love of peace are misinterpreted by some persons as a tacit admission that our principles are indefensible, and that we doubt the validity of our own claims as Ministers of Christ, and the claims of the Churches over which we are placed, to be recognized as the true Churches of God. We, however, are not mere Sectarians, neither do we wish to be.

A short statement of our Principles in the Dutch language for the benefit of those persons who do not readily understand the English, is, I think, a great

* "Liberty is a plant that deserves to be cherished. Like the vine in the Scripture, it has spread from east to west, has embraced whole nations with its branches and sheltered them under its leaves."—*Chatham*.

"The Congregational conception of liberty is that in a Christian Church there should be liberty for all who honour Christ, but not for those who deny Him or who doubt His authority."—*The Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A.*, p. 652 of the above work.

desideratum for the Native Churches. Ought we not to supply it? The brother who may do so will confer a great boon upon them, and do much to prepare this country for the Church of the future.

It may quiet any apprehension* that may exist in the minds of any of our Brethren as to our possibly ulterior object in inviting them to join our Union, by quoting from the *Explanatory Statement* above referred to the following paragraph:—The Churches comprehended in this Union will secure all the advantages of mutual sympathy and aid when seeking to promote common objects, and be a means of strength and encouragement to each other at all times, without sacrificing or impairing their individual freedom. In all things pertaining to internal management and ecclesiastical order, the Churches will be left in the enjoyment of every privilege their Divine Lord has secured for them in the statute book of His kingdom. The Union, when it shall be desired, will cheerfully, according to its power, give its counsel and assistance, or otherwise co-operate with a Church in what it may deem a practicable object; but it will rigorously abstain from any attempt at control or interference. The perfect independence of the Churches will ever be recognized and maintained, as Christ intended them to be, without reference to social position, or other adventitious circumstances.

We would say with the Apostle, "Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand." 2 Cor. i. 24.

* "The exigencies of the Christian Church can never be such as to legitimate, much less render it wise, to erect any body of men into a standing judicatory over the Churches."—*President Stiles., U.S.A.*

If we are prepared, as all our antecedent and our present actions show that we are, to take up with becoming earnestness evangelistic work among the coloured population within the Colony, which the London Missionary Society is gradually, and for good and sufficient reasons, laying down, and like our friends in other sections of the Church from whom, although on some points we differ, in this we are agreed—the Episcopalians, the Wesleyans, the Presbyterians, and other fellow labourers both here and elsewhere—to increase and to conserve the results of many years of toil, to lift out of the initiatory and the temporary, to the higher plane of the intelligent, self-supporting, and independent Church life, *we should sedulously aim to raise up* what, for the want of a better term, may be called *an indigenous Ministry, from and for the people themselves*; and until we possess one our work must be regarded as unsatisfactory and incomplete and not as attaining to the highest success, nor as opening up the prospect of the spread and the permanency of the purest and the most efficient form of Church life. This subject will, I trust, be brought forward by our brother, the Rev. T. D. Philip, B.A., than whom none of us are more competent to deal with it wisely and exhaustively, and with all the advantages arising out of his recent visit to England. It is sure to receive the most careful attention of the Union during its present annual meeting, and lead, as we hope, to some practical result.

It has often been to myself and to other friends and supporters of Christian Missions in South Africa, a matter of profound regret and disappointment that comparatively so few of the coloured races have come forward to be trained for schoolmasters, or for the higher service of the Ministry of the Gospel, among

their countrymen. Whence does this backwardness to engage in the Lord's work arise? Is it from conscious want of mental ability, or the lack of godly zeal, and the absence of a due measure of self-denial? Let them be invited to speak for themselves. They probably would not confess to the existence of any of these reasons, and would in self-justification, and not perhaps entirely without cause, attribute it to the want of sufficient encouragement either from the London Missionary Society, or from ourselves, the members of this Union. The enquiry is now forced upon us by present circumstances and by our plans and hopes for the future—Can we discover the cause or causes of this backwardness on the part of our Native brethren and of European also to give up secular pursuits, and to serve the Church of Christ, in this the land of their birth, or of their adoption?

To do justice to *the subject* it should be viewed under a twofold aspect, the one relating to our Brethren themselves, their proper *status* and the providing of adequate means of *support*; and the other relating to the *cause of Christ*—to which if indeed His genuine disciples they owe so much!—and to the extension of that cause throughout the land. We are by no means unmindful of the former, and we unhesitatingly declare that we know no difference of *status*—arising out of what is merely adventitious—between those called of God to the Ministry of the Gospel, although there may be of *influence* arising from “diversities of gifts of ministrations of workings”; and with reference to the means of *support*, we believe that every reasonable expectation will be met. But it is with the latter—the spread of the religion of the Cross—that at present we are chiefly concerned; the former can only be regarded in their relative importance

as means to the attainment of the supreme end, the glory of Christ Jesus in the recovery of a fallen world to holiness and bliss.

We are, however, free to remark that if the Churches were more fully educated up to the Divine plan "that they who proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel," and if they would adopt the principle of "systematic beneficence," there would be less difficulty in obtaining efficient Ministers "to sow unto them spiritual things." And as on the authority of God's Word, to which alone we owe obedience, we acknowledge no other class of permanent Church Officers than Bishops and Deacons chosen by the people themselves—Bishop, Overseer, and Elder being names pertaining to the same office, and corresponding with Minister or Pastor in use among ourselves—and as the services of Deacons are rendered gratuitously, the burden of support will not press heavily upon a well-constituted Church, intelligently alive to its obligations.

In the judgment of some of our Brethren in the Ministry, and also of other earnest and intelligent Friends, the time has come when an attempt should be made, similar to that made in Cape Town a few years ago by the London Missionary Society, but under more favourable circumstances, to raise up from among ourselves European as well as Native Evangelists to labour among the poor and the neglected in town and country, and from whom, after making full proof of their Ministry, our European Churches might choose their Pastors. Ought not this to be kept steadily in view, and even now a commencement to be made, however small, to give effect to the suggestion? In the event, as may be expected, of a young man of approved piety and gifts wishing to consecrate himself thus to the work of the Lord, provision might be made

at no very great expense to secure for him leisure and assistance for study, and opportunities for evangelistic labour under the direction of one of our more experienced Brethren. If the experiment should prove successful, as there is reason to hope it would be, from it would arise in due time a suitable and permanent Institution. Meanwhile the suggestion may be left with the Brethren.

The establishment of a *Theological Institute* for training young men of approved piety, who have previously given proof of their fitness for, and call to, the Ministry of the Gospel, would be a step in the right direction towards the revival of God's work among us. But is it not, however, the case that we ourselves, the Pastors and Deacons, as well as the ordinary Members of the Churches, need a fresh *baptism of the Spirit*, a Divine and abiding influence upon our own souls, to deepen our piety, and to call forth our zeal, or our self-consecration, both theirs and ours, will be feeble, spasmodic, and without fruit. Our prayer is—"Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee." Fulfil in us, O Lord, Thine ancient promise, and be "as the dew unto Israel." Hosea xiv. 5-8.

V. The members of our Union while gladly admitting the great progress of general Society during the past half century, with its many aspects towards human well being—political, educational and religious—and devoutly thankful to God, the Supreme Ruler, who has brought it to pass; and, moreover, seeing, as we do, in the intellectual activity of the age, when not misdirected, and in its recognised fruits—such as physical benefits, the great advance of Scientific, Biblical and Theological knowledge, and, not the least of the gains to the

cause of Christ, improved methods of presenting Divine truth to the mind and heart—much cause for encouragement: THEY, NEVERTHELESS, ARE NOT WITHOUT THE FEAR LEST THE YOUNG AND THE LESS ESTABLISHED AMONG US SHOULD BE DRAWN ASIDE FROM THE GOOD AND RIGHT PATH BY THE SEDUCTIONS OF ERROR, OF FORMALISM, AND OF UNGODLINESS, AGAINST WHICH AS “WATCHMEN ON THE WALLS OF ZION,” THEY NEED TRUMPET-TONGUED TO SOUND THE ALARM. IS NOT THIS A PART OF OUR MISSION IN SOUTH AFRICA? WHO CAN DOUBT IT!

Dear Brethren and Friends, members of this Congregational Union, suffer from one of the oldest of your number, and whose course in the order of nature must be well-nigh run, to speak a few closing words of anxious solicitude and of affectionate earnestness, the utterance of a heart that beats warmly towards yourselves, and seeks to be in full sympathy with our Lord Jesus Christ, and His world-needed and ever-blessed cause. You and I cannot be insensible of the fact that *the times passing over us are unusually active*, and that the issues for good or for evil will be of the most momentous character. The waves of European opinion—alas, often turbid and deleterious as the waters which flow from our distilleries or from the chemical works in our native land—wash our own shores with wondrous rapidity and force, through the agency of steam communication and the electric telegraph. It is not an unmixed good that we are furnished with the latest expositions of science, and the speculations on sacred literature, within a month of the date of their publication in Europe. Our reviews and serials are within reach of well-nigh every hand, whether of the old or the young, and many of them sow in Christian house-

holds the seeds of uneasiness and of distrust of the ancient verities. When we read learned productions of the Press, written in a captivating style, by some of the most gifted and popular men of the age, but who, to our sorrow and to their own great loss, are *inordinately sceptical*, and reject the Divine authority of the Scriptures, with all their sublime and life-giving doctrines—"to wit, that GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF, NOT RECKONING UNTO THEM THEIR TRESPASSES"—and when we find that they rest not there, but, as a logical consequence, they proceed to disown, or practically to deny, the existence of a living, a personal, an infinitely perfect, and ever-actively-present Lord God Almighty; and when we see among other classes of the people *the non-observance of the Lord's Day*, indifference to religion and avowed or at least practical neglect of its moral precepts: it seems as if the statement of the Apocalypse is being realized, "The Devil is gone down unto you having great wrath knowing that he hath but a short time." These enemies of the Cross of Christ, "for as such we must regard them," whatever their real object or their pretensions may be! ought not, unchallenged, to be able to proceed against the cause in which is involved the Divine glory and the highest interests of humanity, so long as his friends have power to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

We do not invoke the aid of the Civil power to repress misbelief in any of its forms, even that avowed by a Bradlaugh and his followers. The only weapons known to us are argument, persuasion and prayer. But to be silent would indicate moral cowardice, and would be a grievous wrong to man, depriving him of the present benefits of a religious life, and cutting off his

hopes for the future; and it would be no less than treason against our Lord and King. Intellect and heart alike find satisfaction in the belief that we do not "follow cunningly devised fables." And this being our belief, shall we not boldly say so? The issues at stake are infinitely momentous.

Making full allowance for our proneness to exaggerate the importance of the present and to underrate the past, it cannot be denied that the conflict now waging between the champions of the Cross and the advocates of a remorseless infidelity and of utter ungodliness—seen everywhere—is now at its height of skill and determination; and that the latter, forgetful of former defeats, are already anticipating an easy victory over their opponents, and what they are pleased to call their antiquated and worn-out beliefs, and that even now they are ostentatiously commencing their pæans of triumph. This on their part is unseemly and absurdly premature, and time will show it to have been an empty boast, the prelude of disaster and of ruin—as it was in the days of the French Encyclopædists, of whom it has been well said, as it might be said of some writers among our own countrymen, that "their indirect polemics were more dangerous than the keenest direct assaults."

We need to be vigilant and intelligently active; but not alarmed. The Captain of Salvation is with us; he will "teach our hands to war," and enable us by "the Sword of the Spirit" to overcome His foes and our own, and then the benefit will be ours, and the glory will be His now and for ever. Has not this been witnessed during the lengthened past in the contest of the Church with the Celsuses, the Porphyries, and the Voltaires, and with men in more recent times and of less note than they? And the promise has been amply

fulfilled—"When the enemy shall come like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." The energetic words—"The thing that hath been it is that which shall be" are to us equivalent to a Divine promise and the assurance of its fulfilment. And what is this but anticipating the verdict of history on the conflict of to-day?

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again ;

The eternal years of God are hers ;

But Error, wounded, writhes with pain,

And dies among his worshippers."—W. C. BRYANT.

Another danger against which we have to guard others, and we ourselves need to be on our guard, arises from the excessive *Ritualism* now so prevalent—symbolical of a corrupt religious belief, of all that is associated with *Sacerdotalism*, the spirit of the Priesthood and the usurpation of its office. This is a mode of teaching not confined to the Church of Rome—that masterpiece of assumption, of subtlety, of spiritual despotism and of refined idolatry!—which is now putting forth such strenuous efforts to bring this Colony under her feet ;* but it is obtaining wide acceptance among Christian people who at one time correctly believed that since the coming of Christ Jesus there is

* "If I mistake not the signs of the times, we shall have to grapple with Popery, as with a strong man armed, in a renewed tremendous conflict, which it is preparing to wage against spiritual freedom, and the brunt of which will have to be borne by us. . . . Now Popery will have to be met, not only as a system of religious imposture, but as a cleverly concocted scheme for political aggrandisement and power ; and sacerdotalism is the chief weapon with which it will seek to accomplish its end."—*Outside the Fold*, p. 42. By the Rev. Dr. Avelling.

no Priesthood but His own, and that the essence of worship is in the spirit and in the truth in which it is rendered through Him to the great Searcher of hearts. John iv. 23, 24.

Allied to this departure from the simplicity and purity of the Gospel are the several forms of religious *Sensationalism*, which distinguish our times, and fill the sober-minded with anxiety as to whither it is tending, and how it will end.

Alas, these are not the only nor the chief grounds for uneasy forebodings and anxiety, if not for alarm. *We have more to fear from indifference, lukewarmness, and worldliness in the professed Church of Christ itself*; and from the loose political, commercial and social morality so often witnessed where the converse should be found; and from the loosening the bonds of parental authority; and from want of reverence for persons and things; and from general ungodliness: than from the specious arguments of the Infidel, or than from the methods, whether old or new, which appeal chiefly to the æsthetic tastes of men, or to their less refined passions, in presenting the claims of the everlasting Gospel, and in outwardly conducting Divine worship.

Let there be by all means adaptation to the antecedent and the present circumstances of the different classes of the people—and alas, some of them have sunken very low!—but if history has its lessons to teach, and if it has not it has been written in vain! it will not be by either mode, nor yet by any compromise or lowering of the truth as it is in Jesus, that the “offence of the Cross” will really cease. But it will be—as it ever has been—by the power of the HOLY GHOST acting on the soul of man through the Word of God, read or spoken or borne in upon it silently, the power of a living CHRIST made manifest to the heart—that FAITH on Him, the

Crucified, which is perfect repose of the entire being, and leads to and sustains a godly life. O for a more full realization of this great truth !

What then shall we do, we the Members of this Congregational Union ? What indeed can we do, or need we, but *labour on*, instructing the young members of our respective flocks in Bible truths, including our own distinctive principles of Church order and government, and preaching the Gospel of Christ to all men in its simplicity, purity and fulness, irrespective of race or colour, or social condition ; *pray* with increased earnestness for the power from on high to descend upon ourselves and upon our labours : and then, without faltering, *believe in success*, which we, relying on the promise and the oath of God, know is sure to come. The sphere is wide ; its necessities are many and great ; unusual difficulties confront us ; and the call to zealous exertion is urgent. May not our lot have been cast in South Africa for such a time as this ? In common with other organizations, which we delight to recognise, and to which we bid God speed, have not we also a mission to teach the ignorant, to raise the fallen, to bless the wretched, humbly following the example of the Apostles and of the great Master Himself ? It is not for us on this dark continent to ask : " Am I my brother's keeper ? " The Providence of God has placed in our hands the means of promoting his welfare, and the bestowal of His grace upon ourselves immeasurably increases the obligation to undertake the charge. The circumstances in which we are placed demand immediate, persistent and prayerful action, or the opportunity thus " to serve our generation by the will of God " may be lost to us, never to return.

We have felt the force of these considerations, and having been " inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost,"

and encouraged by the Church, to take upon ourselves "this Office and Ministration, to serve God for the promoting of His glory, and the edifying of His people," we have obeyed the call,* and have been solemnly set apart by our Brethren, accredited Ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this entrance upon our work we believe to be Scriptural, although no *Prelate* has laid his hands upon our heads and presumed to convey to us "office grace."† Nor do we forget that *we are the ecclesiastical descendants of the Nonconformists and the Puritans*, and of those noble men, under various

* See an admirable tract—*The Congregational Ministry sustained by a Divine, and an adequate human, sanction.*—Congregational Tract Series, No. x.

† A late Dean of Cape Town, and subsequently the Bishop of Bombay, one of the most estimable of men and the most zealous of clergymen—Dean Douglas—in a discourse entitled "*The Office of the Bishop the foundation of the Church*," preached in Cape Town on the consecration of the lamented Bishop Mackenzie, and published 1861—along with much that is beautiful and true—said, "The Church is in the Bishop. . . . The office of the Bishop is the fulcrum of the lever by which Christ would move the world. From him the Church proceeds, and in him its functions and offices are centred." And speaking of Missions in this country in connection with the Church of England he thus accounts for want of success. "We have built backwards and not forwards, and downwards from the top, instead of upwards from the bottom. And as a consequence our work has been strange, irregular, weak, defective, beginning on no principles, and reaching no foreseen and definite ends."—All this is very wonderful, but is it true? It lacks Scriptural authority, and is not justified by observation and experience. But similar views are held by ecclesiastical dignitaries in this year of grace 1883.

names, who from the days of the Apostles downwards have held fast the truth and maintained purity of worship and of discipline. It is not then too much to say that by the great Head of the Church Himself we have been put in trust with the message of salvation to make it known to both white men and coloured, to European and to Native alike, and that it is at the peril of endangering their souls' eternal well-being, and incurring our Lord's displeasure against ourselves, that we betray the trust, and prove unfaithful to our mission. His words have significance and lessons for ourselves, as they had for the Apostles, the earlier messengers of mercy to a lost world, to whom they were first addressed: "Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours." Let us not be misunderstood. Whilst we assert unflinching our own claim to be considered the Ministers of Christ we gladly concede to others, who on some points differ from us, the same grand office and distinction.

VI. THE GROUNDS OF OUR UNWAVERING CONFIDENCE IN THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUTH, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE, IN THIS COUNTRY AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

The heritage our fathers in the mission field bequeathed to us, is to carry on the work which they commenced for the benefit of the Native races, and for which they, under God and sustained by the sympathy and aid of His people, did so much politically, socially and religiously; and it can scarcely be necessary to add, that the work is still unfinished; but the prospect of successful labour for and among the Native tribes, and their true elevation, that to civilized and Christian

manhood, thank God, waxes brighter and brighter. Are not the fields "white already to harvest?" Sheaves not a few have been reaped, and, as we believe, they are the firstfruits, the promise and the pledge of a general ingathering.

But on the other hand, may it not be, and is it not, asked by the unobservant and the incredulous: Are you not too sanguine, and do you not interpret the supposed signs of the times according to your wishes, rather than in the light of sober facts, and of sound deductions therefrom? Does the amount of past success, taking into account the means used to obtain it, justify your large expectations for the future? We say to the enquirer: We do not call in question your integrity of purpose in seeking information as to the probabilities of ultimate success of Missionary labour in this country; on the contrary we regard it hopefully; but we beg to remind you that all results of that labour are not with equal ease and certainty tabulated, and that the best, the spiritual, are less evident to a casual observer than the physical, which appeal to the outward senses. Moreover we do not at present speak of the whole continent of Africa, with its vast populations, deeply abject and degraded by that "open sore of the world" the Slave trade, which has found its home on this dark continent from times immemorial; worshippers of the Fetish, or the ignorant and bigotted followers of the man of Mecca; but we speak of the Cape Colony and of the adjacent territories, and asking that due allowance should be made for human imperfection in the Native Christians—not unlike that recorded in the New Testament of some of the early Churches, and indeed such as we see in Europe and America, notwithstanding so many national and personal advantages enjoyed through centuries of

years—and bearing in mind the extraordinary difficulties under which Missions in this country have been conducted : we are bold to say, Look around ! There is no room for despair.

It would be thoughtless and unjust to attribute to Missionary effort *exclusively* all that has been effected for the advancement of the Natives in civilization and Christianity. We ought not to lose sight of other and less direct agencies that have been at work, and which far be it from us not gladly to recognize and to estimate at their full value. The Colony generally has made unmistakeable progress towards material improvement during the past few years, and notably since the discovery of diamonds, of gold, and, what is better than either, of coal, increasing to that extent the means of usefulness, as it does of general comfort. The introduction of railways and the electric telegraph further civilization and the spread of the Gospel, by furnishing employment for the unskilled Natives, by rendering intercourse between the inhabitants more easy, and generally by promoting an identity of interests.

Notwithstanding the great commercial depression, which was aggravated by an alarming epidemic, the Small-pox, and the restlessness of some of the Native tribes, *we believe that there is a good time coming for South Africa*, although our own patience may be somewhat strained in waiting for it. Education has made great progress. Missions, if not to our imperfect vision largely successful, are full of promise. Nor is this all. We have “the sure word of Prophecy” to stimulate and encourage us. Men once so confident that “the black man is destined to perish before the white man, and that as civilization advances he will disappear,” begin now to hesitate, and to be ashamed of the doctrine,

and finally to repudiate it ; as well they may, for all enlightened sentiment, and the most stern facts, are against it. Events move rapidly towards the consummation foretold in Holy Writ. "Princes shall come out of Egypt"—and see we not in the virtual occupation or supervision by England of that so long down-trodden land, and justly called "the basest of kingdoms," the beginning of the end ? "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." We believe that not only this Southern portion, but the whole of this dark continent, and the world at large, will eventually be enlightened and blessed, and that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of fallen humanity, will "see of the travail of His soul, and will be satisfied." If not, what is the meaning of the prediction—one of the most ancient—"But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD ?" And how shall we understand those later prophecies interspersed throughout the Book of God—varied in form, in clearness, and in power—which foretell with ever-increasing certainty and under the most beautiful figures, the happiness of mankind in the latter days, under the universal dominion of the Messiah, called in the prophetic word centuries before his advent—"Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace ?" We would further ask : What is the meaning of the sublime prayer taught by our Lord Himself, to Whose mediatorial glory it pertains as one with the Father and with the Holy Spirit, and Who has power to answer it—"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" ? The lisps of our childhood, and the breathings forth of the most earnest desires of our mature years, assuredly will have their counterpart in the accomplished fact, the recovery of a lost world to God, in *Paradise regained* to man, when "the groans

of creation " long heard shall for ever cease, and *Hallelujah* from every tongue, in accord with every heart, shall be the triumphant song of praise.

Once more I quote from myself in the "*Explanatory Statement*" already referred to, the extract being slightly abridged :—The prospect before the Union is bright and cheering. Already its distinctive principles are finding acceptance in this Colony, and will, in due time, gain the ascendancy of those to which they are in antagonism. The power of Christian willinghood will be exhibited to a selfish world. The Church, self-reliant, with the promise of her Lord, shall, unaided from without, sustain her own ordinances. Missions to the heathen will throb with a more vigorous life, because more adequately supported. The Churches of the southern end of this vast continent, in the nineteenth century, may yet vie with those of the northern in primitive times, when Origen, the first of Biblical scholars, taught in Alexandria, Tertullian was presbyter of the church at Carthage, and Augustine, the prince of theologians, presided over the Church at Hippo ; and the spirit of missions, whilst aggressive on heathenism, Mohammedanism, and on every form of error and of sin, will prove conservative of the Churches' life, and of all the elements of prosperity. Then, ere long, shall be heard "great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

Indulging these anticipations we unite in the prayer "The LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers : let Him not leave us, nor forsake us ; that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and His statutes, and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers."

VII. A BRIEF REFERENCE TO OUR FOREFATHERS IN RELIGIOUS PROFESSION AND LIFE—THEIR WRONGS, THEIR HEROISM, THEIR EXAMPLE—AND WHAT THEY WON FOR FREEDOM, CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS, MAY APPROPRIATELY CONCLUDE THIS ADDRESS.

And how was the LORD our God with our fathers, our theological and ecclesiastical ancestors ? Some of the disciples of Christ to whom we claim a relative spiritual kindred, have, as we strongly suspect, been grossly misrepresented by their opponents of the dominant Church, then overshadowing all Christendom ; but there is evidence that they were true witnesses for Christ in the dark ages, and notwithstanding some doctrinal errors into which they are said to have fallen, —and from which we ourselves would dissent—they were in advance of their countrymen, and had much in common with ourselves ; such were the Cathari, the Vaudois or Waldenses, and the Albigeois or Albigenses ; and such were the Lollards, the Reformers, and the Covenanters.

It is our boast that we are the descendants of the *Puritans* and of the *Nonconformists*, those noble men of heroic type to whom England, America, and the World at large owe so much. To make good our claim it is not necessary to be in perfect agreement with them, and to remain so without further development ; on the contrary we with our superior advantages have advanced upon their principles and practices, even as the Englishmen of to-day are in advance of the Englishmen of the earlier periods of our national history. And on this account is our connection with the past to be disallowed and severed ? The promise of Christ to be with His people alway, has been redeemed in their experience times without number, and assuredly His

presence will be with them continuously until the grand consummation of all things. It is well to call to our remembrance the history of our forefathers—that we may gather up its lessons—it records that the arm of the strong ones in Church and State was raised against them; that the wit of the frivolous found in them subjects only for ridicule; and that bigotry and a fanatical hate, almost superhuman, sought their overthrow; but notwithstanding “this great fight of afflictions” they “endured, as seeing Him who is invisible,” and were faithful even unto death. Some of the most touching episodes of history are connected with the Nonconformists and the Covenanters. Their martyr-spirit is aptly described by the words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, “But I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.”* Acts xx. 24.

And what did they—“the Lord working with them”—accomplish? It was given unto them to light and to keep burning the torch of freedom, civil and religious, to assert and maintain the sacred rights of conscience, and to teach and to uphold Divine truth in its integrity, purity and power. They established Churches at home, and commenced Missions abroad, they gave the world an illustration of what Christian willingness can

* A painfully interesting account of those evil days may be seen in—“*Footsteps of our Forefathers: what they suffered and what they sought.*” By James G. Miall. A companion volume is—“*The Martyrs, Heroes, and Bards of the Scottish Covenant.*” By George Gilfillan, M.A. Both of these admirable works were published by A. Cockshaw, 41, Ludgate Hill, London, 1851-1852.

do when prompted and sustained by Divine grace, and they bore their emphatic testimony to the power of the Gospel to conquer the world for Christ, unaided by civil governments, uncheered by the smiles of sovereigns and statesmen, and often violently opposed by a boastful section of the intellect and the scholarship of the ages. From what we know of these self-denying men we are entitled to say that their language was, "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy name we give glory."

Individually, and collectively as the Congregational Union, our fervent desire is to be "imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." We are, however, painfully conscious that we have not attained unto our own *ideal*, the realization of our hopes; but with deep humility of soul and earnestness of purpose, seeking grace from God, we are striving after this higher life, this greater consecration of ourselves to the service of the Lord. May the present meetings of our Union be a means, accompanied by the Divine blessing, of deepening our personal piety, of warming our hearts towards each other, and of stimulating us to renewed effort for the promotion of the glory of Christ in the highest good, temporal and spiritual, of the various peoples of this South Africa, once called the Cape of Storms, but now more appropriately the *Cape of Good Hope*.—"Now unto Him that is able to guard us from stumbling, and to set us before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. Amen."

"Forward! be our watchword,
Steps and voices joined;

Seek the things before us,
 Not a look behind ;
 Burns the fiery pillar
 At our army's head ;
 Who shall dream of shrinking,
 By our Captain led ?
 Forward through the desert,
 Through the toil and fight ;
 Canaan lies before us,
 Sion beams with light."

ALFORD.

NOTE.—Lest what is said on page 16 should through its brevity be misunderstood, and convey an unjust impression, which the writer would exceedingly regret, he desires to add *in his own name*, and in anticipation of the sentiment and action of the Members of the *Congregational Union*, their great thankfulness to the *Directors of the London Missionary Society* for their considerate and liberal grant, out of the proceeds of the sale of some lands at Hankey, to the proposed Theological Institute.

